# CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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## ILLIMITABLE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

By A. C. Thomas.

——And limited the Holy One of Israel.
Psalm lxxviii, 41.

We attribute the creation and preservation of all things to an uncreated, self-preserving Power. It matters not how far back our imaginations may carry us; we shall find no satisfactory resting place, save in the conclusion that there exists a First Cause, an uncaused, creative Energy—God.

The simple acknowledgement of the existence of Deity demands the admission, that He is a *perfect* being. None other would answer to our idea of the First Cause. In him there can be nothing superfluous, nothing lacking. We cannot, indeed, fully comprehend either the mode of His existence, or the boundlessness of His attributes—for that which can be fully comprehended by a finite understanding must itself be finite. But neither can we set bounds to infinity, nor limits to that which is illimitable. We naturally yield assent to the absolute infinitude of all that pertains to the Supreme Ruler. The more minutely we examine His works, the stronger and more numerous are the proofs we discover of the unlimited nature of his attributes. Wisdom, knowledge, goodness, mercy, truth, justice and power, as pertaining to the Creator and Preserver of all, must be considered perfect and illimitable.

In laying the ground-work of this discourse, it may be farther remarked, that every theory is of necessity false, so far as its legitimate conclusions set bounds to any of the Divine perfections; and that they who persist in denying a just inference from the infinity of any or all of the Divine attributes, do thus limit the Holy One of Israel.

The language of the text had immediate reference to the conduct of the ancient people of God. They had long been in bondage beneath the iron hand of Egyptian despotism. Jehovah had promised to the fathers, that He would redeem the children from the grasp and burden of oppression, and give to them the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. The fact that a promise to this effect had been made, was not disputed by any Israelite. Yet, though Moses 'wrought signs in Egypt, and wonders in the field of Zoar,' in proof of the divinity of his mission as their instrumental Savior, they seemed to doubt the possibility of deliverance.—They thought they discovered so many insurmountable obstacles, as to render an inglorious bondage preferable to prospective freedom and happiness in the promised land. Eventually, however, they acknowledged Moses as their leader, and commenced the journey.

They arrived on the borders of the Red Sea. Here commenced their limitations of the Holy One of Israel. They found themselves 'in a great strait.' The waves of the Sea were before them, and the hosts of the Egyptians behind. In this critical situation, they might have reasoned thus—'We cannot flee—if we proceed, we shall perish—if we stand still, we shall inevitably be slain.' Had this generation of unbelievers forgotten the promise of the Almighty? In doubting its fulfilment, they limited the God of their fathers. '*Can* He succor us?' limited the *power* of the Holy One; and '*Will* He deliver us?' called in question the *goodness* and *faithfulness* of Heaven. But, though they believed not, God did not deny Himself. He opened a path through the heaving waves, and delivered His people from the hand of the oppressor.

They proceeded in their journey. They doubted that their faces were set to the land of rest. Jehovah 'led them in the day-time with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.' Still they doubted the power and the goodness of the Lord. They thirsted in the desert. '*Can* He, *will* He give us water?' Rock Horeb was smitten, and the water gushed out. They quenced their thirst and proceeded. Still they doubted. '*Can* He, *will* He give bread also?' Bread was given. Still they doubted. '*Can* He, *will* He provide flesh for his people?' Flesh was provided. 'How often did they provoke Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.'

Indeed, almost every step taken by the children of Israel, in their memorable exodus from Egypt and journey to Canaan, presented to their doubting, unbelieving minds, some cause for limiting either the wisdom, or goodness, or power of the Deity. The happy experience of His favor in the past, seemed to furnish them no sufficient grounds for confidence in the Everlasting God. It was not enough that, for their deliverance from slavery or death, the waters of the Red Sea fled at the bidding of the Supreme; nor were the subsequent evidences of His unceasing goodness and illimitable power, sufficient to satisfy them that He who had promised was not only *willing* but *able* to perform. They continually 'limited the Holy One of Israel.' And what was the consequence? The carcasses of the unbelieving generation fell in the wilderness, but the children inherited the land that the fathers despised.

Professing Christians of all denominations unite in condemning the cited unbelief of the Israelites. It is marvellous, say they, that a people who had received so many tokens of the Divine favor, should so grievously limit the Father of Mercies. We unite in this judgment; and of course shall be inexcusable, if our creeds render us obnoxious to the condemnatory sentence of the text.

In enlarging on the subject thus briefly introduced, I shall notice the several attributes of the Deity, to the end that the impropriety of limiting the Holy One of Israel may be clearly perceived; bring to view several methods by which He may be, and frequently is limited; and then consider the general conclusions in connexion with the more prominent systems of theology.

I. In noticing the Divine attributes, I shall pay no attention to the divisions thereof into negative and positive, absolute and relative, communicable and incommunicable, natural and moral. The object I have in view will better be subserved, by considering 'the seven spirits of God' as so many essential attributes of the Divine nature, susceptible of limitation by erroneous creeds. And,

1st. The *Wisdom* of God. I mention this attribute first, because it is least *liable* to exception in the premises, and because it will allow a latitude of remark equally applicable to any other of the Divine perfections. Wisdom is every where discernable in the mechanism of nature. Franklin aptly observed, that 'the Almighty was the greatest mechanic in the Universe.' The minute portions of creation, equally with the more ponderous, display the wisdom of the Deity. From the mighty worlds that wheel their courses in the heavens, even to the smallest insect that floats in the sun-beam, all cry aloud, 'Great and manifold are thy works, O Lord; in wisdom hast thou made them all.'

I am acquainted with a mechanic who made a watch, the various parts and multiplied wheels of which were so admirably formed and adjusted, that it kept excellent time. And yet this *living machine* was so small, that it could be covered with a half dime coin! Wherever it was exhibited, the skill of the machinist was enthusiastically lauded; and large sums of money were offered for the ingenious bauble.

But the wisdom displayed in the construction of that watch vanishes into nothing, when compared with the wisdom displayed by the Creator in the wing of a butterfly, or the eye of a gnat! In the formation of every, even the most minute parts of the smallest sensitive existence, innumerable miracles are wrought. By the power of the solar microscope, *animals* of perfect and inimitable organization, are discoverable in various liquids. And there is little doubt, that could the microscope be increased to ten million times its present wonderful power, ten million wonders, of which we have now no conception, would be revealed in the works of Omnipotence.

If one man was invested with all the wisdom ever known among men, and all the power, he would be unable to form the smallest artery in the human body. The chemist may analyze a plant or a flower, and discover all its component parts and their relative proportions. He may carefully compound the substances thus ascertained by a chemical process, but he has not formed either a plant or a flower! It requires a *God*, it requires the *all-wise* Jehovah, to form out of chaotic materials an organized existence.

Moses said, 'His work is perfect.' His work, as a whole, is perfect—because he hath made each and every part in wisdom. *His* work excludes contingency, and each part must answer the purpose designed. He made nothing at random—chance is excluded from the workmanship of His hands. He devised the plan in infinite wisdom; and under the influence of His controlling energy, all created existence bows in submission to His Sovereign will.

The burning stars that are set in the blue heavens, move on in congregated unity. Harmony, order, is 'the music of the spheres.' Space is peopled with worlds. Our Solar system is but a speck in the scene as beheld by the eye of the Creator, an integral part of an unbounded whole. The mind may travel until it is lost in the bewildering contemplation of the works of the Holy One—yet beyond the utmost stretch of imagination, suns and systems of worlds exist, created in, and obedient to, the wisdom of Jehovah.

The wonderful regularity of motion of the heavenly bodies, excites our admiring wonder, while their immensity fills us with reverential awe. The astronomer can predict the precise moment of an eclipse, centuries in advance. Every thing moves on in *perfect order*. Two chronometors of so comple structure, were made by a London machinist, that, when at rest, they varied little more than a minute in the space of a

year. The variation, however slight, proved the relative imperfection of the work. Each celestial body is, so to speak, a wheel of the Chronometor of the Universe. In this there is no variation. God is the Maker. He made each part in infinite wisdom, and is Himself the mainspring of the whole. It matters not what portion of the creation we examine, we shall find innumerable evidences of design, each of which is an evidence of the illimitable wisdom of the Creator. 'I am fearfully and wonderfully made,' was the exclamation of the Psalmist. The eye, the ear, the smallest fibre of the human frame—every part of every organized existence, evinces the unbounded skill of the Supreme.

And can there be less wisdom displayed in the moral government of the Deity, than there is in the structure of the material world? Let us beware, lest we be found limiting the Holy One of Israel.

2d. The *Knowledge* of God, though intimately connected with His wisdom, is expressive of a somewhat different attribute of His nature. Wisdom is the devising faculty—knowledge, the perceptive. 'Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.' He declares 'the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.' When Deity gave existence to the first link in the vast chain of causes and effects, He distinctly perceived and infallibly knew, that the end designed would be effected. He saw that the requisite means had been provided in the original plan. He knew there could be no failure in the execution of the object, for His wisdom had so ordered affairs that there could be no contingency as to the adoption of efficient measures. We cannot conceive how He could declare 'the end from the beginning,' without knowing from the beginning what the end would be—and that without the possibility of mistake. We may as properly question the infinity of the Divine wisdom, as to deny the infinity of the Divine knowledge. His wisdom devised the plan, and suggested the requisite means to complete it. And his knowledge perceived that the Design of His wisdom would be accomplished to the fullest extent. It is clear that he who denies these conclusions, does, in effect, limit the Holy One of Israel.

3d. The *Goodness* of God is a prominent attribute of the Divine nature. Every evidence of His wisdom is equally an evidence of His goodness. The science of this enlightened age should not be satisfied with discovering *design* in every part of the Creator's work. It should go farther. It should be satisfied with nothing less than a clear discovery of the *benevolent* design of each and every part. Benevolence is every where displayed. The perfect adaptation of means to ends, is an evidence of wisdom—the adaptation of means to *benevolent* ends, is an evidence of goodness *and* wisdom. Shall it be inquired, where is this goodness discoverable in the works of the Creator? Rather let us ask, where is it *not* discoverable? The whole structure of the human frame—what is it but a unity of benevolent miracles? Every organic function, in its natural, unperverted condition, is the medium of communicating happiness. Each of the animal senses is productive of unmeasured enjoyment. The eye—O what a flood of bliss is communicated to the mind through this wonderful congregation of nerves and humors! The ear—who may estimate the pleasure that is poured upon the soul through this delicate organ! The faculties of the mind—who can duly appreciate the value of reason, memory, imagination! Indeed, 'God is every where'—wisdom is every where manifest—goodness is every where displayed.

'——I cannot go,
Where universal love smiles not around.'

And can we properly asssign limits to the goodness of that all-wise, all-knowing Being, whose whole nature, whose very essence is Love? 'The Lord is good to all.' Thus saith the Scripture—and nature cries aloud, through all her works, '*The Lord is good to all.*' The sentiment is written in letters of light on the stars above us, the flowers beneath, the world around us, and the world within.

When Deity had finished the work of creation, He beheld and pronounced it '*very good.*' He made all things in wisdom. His knowledge beheld no less the *remote* than the *immediate* operation of every particle—and in the light of his all-seeing eye, He affirmed that all He had made was 'very good.' And can any other than a very good *end* be produced by what in the *beginning* was declared to be very good by a Being who declares 'the end from the beginning?' An affirmative reply would limit the Holy One of Israel.

4th. The *Mercy* of God expresses an idea as distinct from goodness, as does knowledge from wisdom. Goodness is equally extended to the virtuous and the vicious—mercy views man only in the character of a sinner. The righteous, if there be any, have no part nor lot in the *mercy* of God, considered as an abstract attribute. 'The whole need not a physician, but they who are sick.' Sinners, and sinners alone, have need of 'the saving health,' the mercy of the Holy One. It is because 'all have sinned' that all have 'an interest in Christ,' the great physician of souls. Many there are who would have mankind become *saints*, to the end that they may obtain the interest of which I speak. But, in my view, man *loses* his 'interest in Christ,' so soon as he becomes *perfectly righteous*. This can only be when all things are reconciled to God. Then there will be no sinners to subdue—then Christ shall give up the mediatorial kingdom, and be himself subject to the Father, that God may be all in all.

I throw out these hints to explain the nature of Divine mercy. It recognizes sin in man as the cause of suffering; and its operations are designed to 'finish sin, make an end of transgression, and bring in everlasting righteousness.'

In each of the twenty-six verses of the 136th Psalm, it is said 'The mercy of the Lord endureth forever.' We are also certified, that 'His tender mercies are over all his works.' This conjoint testimony of the record, furnishes a suitable caution against limiting this sin-conquering and soul-subduing attribute of the Holy One of Israel.

5th. The *Truth* of God, is an essential perfection of His Divine nature. His sincerity, faithfulness, and unchangeability, seem to be embraced by the attribute truth. 'He is a God of truth. His truth endureth to all generations.' Each evidence of His wisdom is an evidence of his goodness—each evidence of His goodness is an evidence of the sincerity of His love to the children of humanity. The unvarying testimonials of his benevolent regard with which our existence has been crowned, furnish the guarantee for the faithful performance of His promises, no less than the fulfilment of His threatenings. And His unchangeability is so obviously essential to His existence, as to preclude the propriety of confirmatory remark.

Jesus referred to the sun and the rains as furnishing both proof and illustration of the Universal Love of God. Do we allow the *sincerity* of those expressions of Divine Benevolence? Then surely we must allow, that for all upon whom the rains descend, and for all who enjoy the precious rays of the sun, the Supreme Being entertains sincere affection. The good and the evil, the just and the unjust, are the objects of the sincere love of the Creator. And what shall I add, concerning His *faithfulness?* Surely he who made all things very good, will govern all things very well, and, in faithfulness to his original design, produce an end correspondent with the beginning. And He who is *unchangeable* in His *nature*, will not allow either of His attributes to cease striving with man, until the wonderful and benevolent object of creation shall be completely fulfilled. To allow a consummation less desirable than this, would be to limit the Holy One of Israel.

6th. The *Justice* of God, as well as His other attributes, is but a modification of His nature. When we speak of the wisdom or justice of *God*, we speak of the wisdom or justice of *Love*—for 'God is Love.' But e is not wisdom nor justice, in the abstract. *These* are His *attributes*—*that* is *nature*, His sole *essence*.

The 'justice of God' is a phrase fraught with many fearful associations in the minds of many Christians. They forget that Divine justice is neither more nor less than the 'justice of Love.' This attribute is supposed to have assigned to it the infliction of punishments alone. This is an error. The justice of God distributes rewards for virtue, as well as punishments for vice; and in both cases, Divine love is manifested as the cause, and human happiness as the ultimate object. No other cause can prompt the exercise of Divine justice—no other object can be assigned to the Providence of Love.

7th. The *Power* of God is an attribute of His nature, the infinity of which, with a little explanation will not be denied. The Supreme Being can do whatever is not contradictory of His own nature, and whatever does not in itself involve a contradiction. 'He cannot deny Himself.' 'It is impossible for Him to lie.' *Tha* refers to His nature, Himself—*this* to His attributes. If it be impossibl for a God of truth to lie, it is impossible for e im to be unwise, ignorant, evil, unmerciful, unjust, or weak. With this explanation, all will allow that 'power belongeth unto God'—yea, a power which enables Him to carry into execution every plan that his goodness can prompt, or is wisdom devise.

I have thus spoken, not of seven *Gods*, but of the 'seven *spirits* of God.' Let us carefully remember that this septinity of attributes exist in unity. It would be blasphemy to affirm that there is less harmony in the mind of the Deity, than there is in His works. Myriads of worlds, and millions of suns and systems, people the vast celestial expanse. Yet, like a *perfect* piece of machinery, each part moves on in *perfect* harmony with the rest. The seven primary planets of our solar system, perform their rotary and orbicular motions with greater precision than move the wheels of a well-regulated clock. All is order, all is harmony. We dare not say less of the seven attributes of the Great Spiritual Sun?

II. Having thus noticed the several Divine perfections and their unity, we proceed to bring to view the several methods by which the Deity may be, and frequently is, limited. And,

1st. The Holy One of Israel may be, and frequently is limited, by a denial of the absolute infinity of one or other of His perfections. It is allowed, that 'the Lord is good to all' in the present state of being—but there are many who deny that He will be good to all in the immortal life. What is this but a two-fold limitation of the Deity? It calls in question the unchangeability of the Eternal. It is limiting the eternity of His goodness to a part of His creatures, and limiting to the span of human life His goodnsss to the rest! But the limitation of our present mode of being to three score years and ten, cannot limit to that period the duration of the Divine goodness; nor can a change in man from mortality to incorruption, effect a change in the nature of the King Immortal. If He be now 'good to all,' as the Scriptures affirm and nature abundantly testifies, it is placed beyond the shadow of a doubt that His goodness will ever be extended to all His rational offspring. Before the

light of this rational conclusion the dogma of interminable suffering flies away, as fly the mists of the night before the refulgent glory of the risen dawn.

The mercy of God is another attribute which is grievously limited by the creeds of men. 'His tender mercies are over all his works.' Yet many there are, who suppose that millions of the human race will be severed from His mercy by the hand of death, and doomed by His justice to the endurance of unmitigated pain!—O shall His tender mercies become like unto the 'tender mercies of the wicked,' which are cruelty? Shall we allow that the fever of sin which burns in the sinner's breast, can dry up the fountains of mercy in the bosom of the 'Father of mercies'?—Forbid this limitation of Thy nature, O Thou Rock of Salvation! Open the eyes of Thy erring children, that they may cease to limit thy mercy. Bid them behold in the waters that gushed from Rock Horeb in the desert, a figure of the living streams of grace that proceed from *Thee*!

2d. The Holy One of Israel may be, and frequently is limited, by allowing that there are conflicting principles in the Divine mind. It is allowed by all, that the mercy of Deity desires the eventual destruction of sin, and the introduction of all into the glorious liberty of the children of God. But it has been affirmed, that "A God all mercy is a God unjust, that the claims of justice must not be disregarded. Vain, presumptious man! who art thou that wouldst have God divided against Himself? Who art thou that wouldst

"Set at odds Heaven's righteous attributes?"

No: we may not thus limit the Holy One of Israel.. We could as easily conceive of merciful injustice as of just cruelty; of unjust-mercy as of unmerciful justice. God is *not* divided against Himself. We limit Him whenever we allow that mercy requires what justice denies, or that justice demands what mercy refuses to grant. The end designed by the mercy and justice of Love, is *one*, indissolubly one; the subjection of man to the dominion of reghteousness, the reconciliation of all things to the reign of holiness and truth.

3d. The Holy One of Israel may be, and frequently is limited, by allowing that the affection of the Creator is influenced by the faith and conduct of the creature. Popular opinion, in this particular, is radically erroneous and God-dishonoring. We have been repeatedly assured, that the unbelieving and impenitent are the objects of the fierce displeasure of the Lord; but that, if they believe and repent, they will become the objects of His affectionate regard. What is this but a limitation of the Almighty? It is placing the effect for the cause, and the cause for the effect. It is exalting the creature and debasing the Creator. It is wresting the sceptre of dominion from the hand of Omnipotence, and making of man the ruler and the judge. It is virtually affirming that the First Cause is dependent on the caprice of the human will, for the exercise of His own nature. It is saying, in effect, that 'God loves us because we first loved Him;' and thus brings His character to a level with that of sinners, who 'love those only who love *them*.' We are certified that 'the goodness of God leadeth to repentance.' Goodness in God is the cause; reformation in man is the effect. And our love to Him is the natural consequence of the manifestation of His love to us.

4th. The Holy One of Israel may be, and frequently is limited, by allowing that man is the arbiter of his own eternal destiny. The idea that the Creator gave to the creature an agency and powers which Omnipotence either *cannot* or *will not* over-rule to the accomplishment of His original design, is an insult offered to the majesty of heaven! It impeaches His wisdom, and goodness, and power. It sullies the brightness of the 'excellent glory,' and dims the halo that encircles the crown of the Father of spirits. *God* is the Savior, the Savior of all: He will not give His glory to another. The creature must submit *to be* a creature; for the Creator will do as He pleases with His own. To Him be the honor and praise—for the Maker of all things is the Sovereign Disposer of all. '*Thy* will be done.' 'He *doeth* His will.' And although we are exhorted to 'work out our own salvation,' we are informed that it is, God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.' And it is His *will* and *good pleasure*, which He hath purposed in Himself, to gather all things together in Christ. It matters not how the contrary sentiment may be tortured from its true import; on it will still be found written the condemnatory sentence of the text.

5th. The Holy One of Israel may be, and frequently is limited, by doubting the parental care and benevolence of Divine Providence. When Jacob said, 'All these things are against me,' he limited the Supreme; as did also the Israelites on the banks of the Red Sea and in the desert. And whoever distrusts the watchful goodness of the Deity, in any circumstance, falls into the condemnation. Though the winds roar and the waves run high, though darkness veil the skies above, and the ocean yawn around us, still should hope be the anchor of the soul; still should faith, the celestial magnet, point to the risen star of the resurrection in the land of rest. Our lives have hitherto been crowned with goodness; and we have every reason to believe, that He who created will continue to bless. Even in the silence and the gloom of the chamber of death, he who staggers not at the promises through unbelief, will hear the still small voice of the Holy One, 'Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be thou not dismayed, for I am thy God.'

6th. The Holy One of Israel may be and frequently is limited, by allowing the existence, under His moral government, of an absolute evil. By absolute, I mean ultimate evil—evil without an end. To say that such an evil exists, is either to affirm that God designed it from the beginning, or to limit Him in wisdom and knowledge. To say He *Cannot* prevent it, limits Him in power; and to affirm that He *will not*, limits Him in goodness and mercy. To allow that ultimate evil was embraced in the original design of the Creator, is to envelope the Divine character in the blackness of darkness forever.

———Father of spirits! grant us but an unclouded view of thy altogether lovely character; and then, though deluded men may speak evil of things they understand not, we will continue to believe and trust in *Thee*, and love and pity *them*!—— ——

III. Having thus hastily glanced at the several methods by which the Holy One of Israel may be, and frequently is limited, the general conclusions drawn may be considered in connexion with the more prominent systems of theology.

And 1st of Calvinism. I speak not now of Arminio-Calvinism, but of the Calvinism of the original school. This system limits *five* of the seven attributes of the Deity—wisdom, goodness, mercy truth, and jnstice.

It limits Him in wisdom. This may seem a strange assertion, inasmuch as wisdom is the devising faculty, and Calvinism disallows contingency in the Divine government. But let us remember that the Scriptures speak of the wisdom from beneath, as well as the wisdom from above. The former is 'earthly, sensual and devlish'—the latter is 'full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.' *This* is the wisdom of God—*that* the wisdom of Calvinism.

The inquisitors of old exercised the wisdom from beneath, in the construction of instruments for the infliction of the most exquisite torture. But what was the rack, the wheel, the stake, to the diabolical instruments of cruelty which Calvinism supposes have been made by the wisdom of the Almighty? Look through the glass: The shadowy phantoms of a diseased imagination rise on the billows of liquid fire to the battlements of the City of God, and go down again to the skull-paved depths of perdition, shrieking discordant with the loud Alleluias of the saints in light! Again they rise on the burning elements to enhance by their blasphemy the happiness of the blest, and by their curses to cause a louder Amen to swell from the lips of the angelic host!———Ah, my friends, the wisdom from above, is '*full of mercy*'—it is '*full* of GOOD *fruits*'—it is without PARTIALITY.' Calvinism has no part nor lot in the wisdom of LOVE.

It limits the Holy One of Israel in goodness and mercy. It confines the eternity of His benevolence to an elect few; and utterly refuses it to those who are supposed to be ordained to unending dishonor and wrath. It indeed allows, that 'the Lord is good to all' in the present life—but limits His goodness and mercy toward the non-elect, to the going down of the sun!

It limits Him in truth and justice. For how can there be sincerity in the professions of His love to all in this life, if he predestinated a portion of his creatures to endless suffering in the next? And it limits His justice to the infliction of a supposed merited punishment on a portion of His disobedient offspring, while it maintains that all are equally deserving of never-ending wrath.

Knowledge and power are the only attributes of Deity which are not limited by the doctrine of Calvinsm. But what are knowledge and power without the directing influence of goodness and wisdom? Alas! they would prove nothing to us, except the causes of a gloomy foreboding of evils which we might forever dread, without being able to avoid.

2d. Arminianism limits the Holy One of Israel as essentially as does Calvinism. Nay, the latter system is less liable to exception than the former. Indeed, Arminianism is virtually Atheism! It limits the Deity in wisdom. It allows him no definite object in creation, no design as respects the final condition of man. It leaves all things in the moral world to the dominion of chance, supending our eternal interests on uncertainties. Every thing, in this system, is contingent—what is contingency but uncertainty—what is uncertainty but chance—and what is chance but virtual Atheism!

If the Free-willer contends that God *had* a design in creating, which design embraced the condition of man in the incorruptible life, then he must accept either Calvinism or Universalism. If he prefers the former, he must be content with the foudation of his faith in the wisdom from beneath. If he rejects Calvinism and denies Universalism, and still maintains that the original design of the Creator embraced the immortal state of the human race, he limits the Omnipotent in power.

Arminianism either limits the Deity in knowledge, or charges Him as well with duplicity as with cruelty: cruelty, in creating souls which He knew would be endlessly miserable; and duplicity, in making overtures of salvation which He knew would be refused. To deny these conclusions, is to limit Him in knowledge as to the result of creation. And indeed, what is the doctrine of probation but a virtual acknowledgement, that Deity placed man on trial to ascertain what use he would make of his agency!

Arminianism likewise limits the Holy One of Israel in goodness and mercy, in truth and in justice. It limits His goodness toward a part of

His creatures to the limits of human life; and says to His mercy, 'Thus far——but no farther.'

It denies His unchangeability and faithfulness; and alleges, that, by the interference of His mercy, the demands of His justice on those who are saved will never be liquidated. It limits, not only the Holy One of Israel, but the 'Holy Three,' of which we hear so much. It limits the benevolence of the Father, in creation and providence; it limits the grace and compassion of the Son, in redemption; and it limits the Holy Spirit, in the extent and efficiency of its converting influence. It indeed affirms that sufficient provision has been made for the salvation of all—but that which does not answer the end designed, is not sufficient. And while it affirms a universal atonement, it furnishes no guarantee that the Savior 'shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.'

On the contrary, it asserts that the desires of the Lord Jesus, which are allowed by this system to embrace the utter extermination of all sin and misery from the moral Universe, and the consummation of perfect and universal holiness and felicity, will *never* finally be accomplished: that Christ, if he ever had any design at all—an admission which it is inconsistent with the first principles of the system itself to admit, will be disappointed and defeated in those designs. A conclusion which never, never—can be reconciled with God's moral Omnipotency, or the fact that he gave his Son plenary powers to secure the great object of his glorious mission on the earth. 'Thou hast given him power over all flesh'—to what end? 'that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.' Surely, then, eternal life to any human soul, is the effect of the generous *power* of God in Christ; and if that power is concerned, no matter in what way, whether moral or otherwise, so long as it is efficient to the accomplishment of the object, in the salvation of a single soul; the salvation of all other souls is equally dependent upon it, and must be secured in the same way. But Arminianism limits the power of God in Christ. It asserts, virtually, that the power of the creature to resist and defeat the Divine will, is greater than the power of the Creator to accomplish it. Or if the system, driven to a strait, admits the sufficiency of the Divine power so far as the few that are to be saved are concerned, it next denies the universal application and success of that power; which is but saying, with Calvinism, that God is partial.

The power given by God to Christ, was granted to the end that he might (not merely offer, but give) eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. And is there any foundation for a partial system here? No: for it is elsewhere declared, that, 'The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hands';—'All thine are mine, and all mine are thine'; and Christ has taught that, 'all which the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me shall in no wise be cast out.' So that there is no room here for that partiality which Arminianism is obliged to assert, as existing in the Divine operations.

In short, so long as the doctrine of God's final favor to some, and his eternal hatred to others, of the human family is maintained, every system which holds communion with it, must of necessity, limit some of the illimitable attributes of God—must deny his wisdom or his power, his goodness or his mercy.

3d. But Universalism is liable to none of the cited objections. It does not limit the Holy One of Israel. It allows to the Deity the possession of all his attributes. It contends that the plan of creation was prompted by uncreated goodness, devised by infinite wisdom, and that it will be carried into execution by the omnipotent energies of the Divine nature. It contends that the attributes of Deity, as brethren, 'dwell together in unity'—that 'God is love—that His justice is the justice of love—that justice and mercy 'keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.'

And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of the multiform excellencies of 'the faith once delivered to the saints.' It is honorable to God, and conducive to the well being of man. It unveils the mystery that was hidden from ages and generations, and reveals the blessedness which for all is reserved in the mansions above. And the gladdening prospect fills the soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

But, alas! this precious Gospel is 'despised and rejected of men!' Many, indeed, have believed and 'entered into rest'—but thousands there are who 'cannot enter in because of unbelief.' Men have been despatched by those who limit the salvation of God, to spy the promised land. They have returned with a false account. They have indeed declared that it is a goodly land and a rich—they have shown specimens of 'the grapes and the figs'--and have said, 'O that we were able to go up and possess the land.' But they have spoken of the 'sons of Anak,' and the people have thus been induced to remain in the wilderness, seeking for grapes on the thorns of Calvinism, and for figs on the thistles of Arminianism. And unless they repent of their limitations of the Holy One of Israel, their carcasses must fall in the desert of unbelief. But the children shall inherit the land that the fathers despised. The rising generation shall throw off the shackles of fear, gird on the armor of truth, and enter, through faith, into the peace that passeth understanding. The spirit of untrammelled inquiry is abroad; and the light of Universalism is diffusing its quickening and renovating rays. The world will yet be redeemed from the dominion of darkness and error; and the nations will rejoice and be glad in the salvation of God. They will yet see, that the Sovereign of the Universe is also the Father of His creatures; that all His attributes are consistent with the paternal relation, and are united to secure the final good of all His moral intelligences. In this view of the Divine government, they will learn to adore, to love, to serve and confide in Him, as the only, and the altogether safe Being, 'to whom they can commit the keeping of their souls as to a faithful Creator'---their hope in life and their final portion forever. AMEN.

*Christian Preacher.*

## RELIGION.

We read in the New Testament, that 'where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' This is a faithful saying, and one which approves itself to every mind able or willing to reason on the direct tendency of the christian religion. Its spirit is essentially free; and in proportion to the prevalence of real, religious sentiment will be the spread of true freedom. Its doctrines tend to raise man from the sepulchre of ignorance, superstition and sin, to clothe him with a new power of action and nobler motives for exertion. They are before him as a pillar of of fire, guiding him through the mazes of doubt and debasement, and illuminating his mind with a light of truth which makes him 'free indeed.' The following remarks on the spirit and tendency of religion, are, I think, as eloquent as they are true; and will, I am persuaded, well repay the trouble of a perusal.

RELIGION. 'Religion is naturally and necessarily the most interesting subject of human thought. It embraces in its wide extent the whole circle of moral duties. It regards us in all our social relations, and is connected with all the cares and business of common life. But it stops not here. It carries us forward to that dark and shadowy futurity which the mind of man has, in every age, been anxious to explore, but which it has always shuddered to enter. It bears us upward through the suns and systems of this material world, to the throne of that Being, in whose presence all the distinctions of human life are destroyed, at whose glance, the world itself 'fleeth away as a shadow.' There the mind feels itself alone. It is overwhelmed by a sense of its personal accountableness. It gains no support, it acquires no confidence, from the opinions, or usages or authority of its fellow mortals. It must act for itself. It feels that its destiny through the interminable ages of its duration, and in the unseen worlds through which it may be carried in the progress of its existence, is far too important to be intrusted to others. When the mind descends from these sublime contemplations, and returns to the ordinary duties of life, it bears with it still the impression of its recent employment. It retains something of its purity and elevation and self-respect. Having just disclaimed human authority in its most important concerns, it is not prepared to yield implicit obedience to the caprices of human power in the common affairs of life. He who, in contemplating the Supreme Being, has just felt that crowns and sceptres are vain and transitory honors, that personal merit makes the only real distinction, is not prepared for slavish submission to a human monarch, or to cower and tremble at a human frown. The spirit of christianity is therefore essentially a *free* spirit.'

If the above sentiments, are true, it becomes all men, and especiallly those who thirst after true liberty, to turn to the scriptures as their guide, to ponder over the elevating truths therein revealed, and suffer them to have full influence on their hearts. By this means, the needy may be made rich, and those who have been 'all their life time subject to bondage,' may partake of that 'liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.'—*Universalist.*

*Give attendance to reading.* I Tim. iv. 13]---Besides reading the Jewish scriptures to the brethren in their assemblies for worship after the example of the Synagogue, Timothy was here directed to read these scriptures in private likewise for his own improvement, ver. 15. that h e might be able to confute the Jews and Judaizers who founded their errors on misinterpretations of the scripture. Thus understood, the direction, as the ancient commentators observe, is an useful lesson to the ministers of the gospel in all ages. For if a teacher, who possessed the spiritual gifts, was commanded to read the scriptures for improving himself in the knowledge of the doctrines of religion, how much more necessary to help those teachers, who must derive all their knowledge of the gospel from the scriptures and who cannot, without much study, be supposed to know the customs, manners, and opinions alluded to in these writings.---*Macknight.*

So great a proportion of our time is occupied by the cares and pleasures of life, that few hours of leisure are allowed us for reflection on the past, or meditation on the future. From the moment we leave our pillow in the morning, we find ourselves involved in a vortex of employments. We are naked, and must be clothed—we are thirsty, and must drink—we are hungry, and nature demands food; even after these absolute necessities are supplied, then follows the long train of imaginary wants: we are the slaves of avarice—we aspire to power or pant after fame. We enter with ardor into the lists; our memory brings up no more of the past, than can aid us in the pursuit, and anticipation is occupied solely by the light hopes of success or the dark fears of failure.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE, NEW-YORK, AND ABEL C. THOMAS, PHILADELPHIA.

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1833.

## NOTICE.

The 12th Lecture in reply to the Lectures of the Rev. Dr. Brownlee, against Universalism, will be delivered in the Orchard street Church to-morrow evening, May 5.

☞ As many calls have been made, on business, at our late residence, 85½ Bowery, even since the removal of the Publishing Office from there; we deem it necessary to advise those interested, that the business of the Paper is now wholly transacted at the Publishing Office, No. 2 Marble Building, Chatham-Square, and that our residence is changed to 87½ Bowery, two doors above the late one. P.

## PENNSYLVANIA CONVENTION.

The Pennsylvania Convention of Universalists will meet at Wommelsdorf, Berks Co. on Saturday, May 25, and continue in session two days.

JACOB MYERS, *Standing Clerk.*

## UNIVERSALIST CONFERENCE.

*In Potter's Meeting House, Good Luck, N. J. Wednesday, May* 15, 1833.

There will be preaching at the house of Col. S. C. Johnes, near Hightstown, N. J. on Monday evening preceding; from which place ministering brethren will be conveyed to Toms River village, (8 miles north of Good Luck,) where preaching will be expected on Tuesday evening. On Wednesday morning, afternoon and evening, meetings for public worship will be held in the house in which JOHN MURRAY first preached in this country. Ministering brethren are affectionately requested to attend.

A. C. T.

## THE NEW VOLUME.

It doubtless has been perceived, by most of our Patrons, from the last number, that we propose altering the title of the Messenger to that of

**NEW-YORK CHRISTIAN MESSENGER**
AND
**PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSALIST,**

And to publish it simultaneously in this City and Philadelphia. As we remarked in our last, for the sake of uniformity, it is not designed the change in title shall take place until the commencement of the *third* vol. which will be the first Saturday in November, though the papers will be forwarded to Philadelphia, from the present No. in a package, and be regularly distributed there by a Carrier.

Little explanation will be needed for this measure. Our steady purpose from the commencement has been to make the Messenger as *useful* as possible in the cause which it has espoused. It commenced in an unreserved devotion to the cause of *Universalism*, and it has been our undeviating aim to have it stand forth calmly, though fearless and decided, in defence of that glorious sentiment, and we flatter ourselves, from the many tokens of approbation bestowed upon it, that our effort has not been in vain. With each additional testimony of this kind, we have felt impelled to increased efforts in enhancing its talent and means of interest to its Patrons. These considerations prompted us to the engagement of Br. Thomas' valuable services, in the Editorial Department, in connexion with Br. Sawyer's. Our Patrons have abundant proof of the unwearied exertions of both these brethren, and the unequivocal expressions we have received, leave us no room to doubt that their labors have been duly appreciated.

Br. Thomas' connexion in the Editorial Department, and the increasing interest manifested towards the Messenger in Philadelphia, by his numerous friends there, has seemed to give them a claim on it for some arrangement of this nature, and at the solicitation of many, we have been induced to make it. By this arrangement our Philadelphia Patrons may feel themselves identified with the Paper, much the same as those in this City. Br. Thomas will give attention to every thing pertaining to the Philadelphia department, in all local information, notices, &c. and in short in all that may more immediately interest Patrons there; and he has also kindly tendered his services in attention to all business there pertaining to the Paper. Applications, therefore, may be made to him, at No. 132 Chesnut-street.

In conclusion, we cannot but hope the measure may be found advantageous to both Patrons and ourselves, and above all, to that cause in which we all have a deep and lasting interest. As heretofore, no effort on our part will be spared to sustain and even extend the present reputation of the Messenger—to make it in reality a *Christian Message* to its Patrons, and most especially a UNIVERSALIST Paper. It was commenced under the most ardent hope and desire that it might become an humble instrument in improving our common cause, in this unfortunate City. It has been prosecuted with a confident reliance that the God of Jacob would not fail to bless whatever efforts in it there were consistent with His will and word. The result thus far, in regard to this City particularly, is before the world—let them be the judges. P. PRICE.

## LETTERS TO THE REV. DR. BROWNLEE—NO. XII.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—

I will now proceed to an examination of your *third* proposition. It is stated thus: "A belief in the doctrines of Universalism involves great inconsistencies and absurdities." Upon this you say,

"1. *The whole system is founded on mistaken views, as to the nature of* LAW, PENALTY *and* PUNISHMENT.

Man being a creature, is necessarily under an obligation to obey his Creator—that is, he is under a law. A penalty must of necessity be attached to a law, and it must be such as will enforce obedience to the law. If it be of such a character, that more will be gained by violating the law, than will be lost by incurring the penalty, then the penalty invites to the commission of crime. The law of God is designed to produce infinite excellence, and obedience to it, will insure eternal happiness—the penalty ought not therefore to be trifling in its character and temporary in its duration. As to punishment, its ultimate end is to deter others not to destroy its subject—that is a secondary effect which necessarily results from the primary object of punishment. Can it then be that the penalty attached to God's law is merely this, if a sinner dares to violate its precepts, then shall he be subject to the awful punishment of being put under a course of discipline to prepare him to be taken to heaven."

I quote from the Christian Intelligencer. Although this may not be your language, I doubt not that it expresses your sentiments at the time your first Lecture was delivered.

I acknowledge man to be a creature, and under a law—under obligation to obey his Creator. But, sir, whence arises this obligation? If man is in duty bound to obey God, there may be some reason assigned for it. What then are the claims of the Deity upon the human race? You tell us that man is a *creature*, and is therefore necessarily under obligations to obey. It may be so, but I can imagine circumstances in which the fact of man's being a creature would scarcely give the Creator any right to command; and where the is no right to command, there is necessarily no obligation to obey.—Suppose, sir, with Calvin, that God created some merely to damn them eternally, and what right, I ask, has he to claim obedience. He has created them it is true, but their existence so far from being a blessing, is on the contrary an awful and endless curse. They owe him nothing, for they have received no single benefit from his hand. But here you may suggest, that all the blessings of this world are fruits of God's bounty. I am aware of it, but who would covet such bounties? For they are given with an infallible foreknowledge, or a fixed predetermination that, brought into the final damning account, they shall not only aggravate guilt, and sink the miserable wretch still deeper in perdition, but also by the power of contrast, make the sufferer more alive to his pains, and thus render the eternal agonies of hell still more intolerable. I ask again, who would covet bounties thus followed by ten fold wretchedness? Indeed, sir, I care not, whether you adopt the sentiments of Calvin or Arminius. In either case the temporal benefits and comforts of this world, are not blessings to those who shall eventually suffer endless punishment, but the bitterest curses which infinite malignity could inflict. True, they wear the livery of Heaven's gifts. But so far from partaking of their divine character, they unite at once the artifice and cruelty of hell!

The mere fact that God is our Creator furnishes no reason why we should obey him. It must first be granted that in creating us, the original and ultimate design of the Deity was benevolent, otherwise the gift of our existence renders him rather an object of aversion than of love and obedience. Deny what Scripture and experience bear united testimony to, that "the Lord is good unto all, his tender mercies are over all his works," and you at once dissolve the ties that bind man in obedience to Heaven; or as your last fatal resort, you are forced to acknowledge that power gives right—a principle on which undisguised tyranny is reared, and under which innocent blood has flowed for ages. Beware of ascribing this principle to God. Stain not the divine character with an imputation so dishonorable.

No proposition is susceptible of more abundant proof than that we should obey God because he is our Benefactor—our Father. And this remark embraces as well his ultimate, as his present dealings with us. To say, as it is now quite popular to believe, that God is good to all in the present world, but will make a part of the human race endlessly wretched in the world to come, is but another way to deny his *immutability*, which both reason and revelation declare to be essential to the divine perfections.—When God ceases to be good to any individual, then ceases all obligation on the part of that individual to obey him.

But again; we shall arrive at the same conclusion relative to the reason of our obedience to God, if we contemplate the nature of the duties which he requires. The first great duty which we owe God, is evidently to love him with all our hearts. Now the Apostle discovered no hesitation in declaring of himself and his brethren, "We love Him because he first loved us." It is true, he does not affirm that they should not have loved God, unless his love had first been manifest, and yet the candid reader can hardly doubt that such were his sentiments. We are taught, I know, to love our enemies, b t it is only that we may be the children of God, not his moral opposites. The inference is irresistible that God

loves his enemies. How then can he hate and damn for ever his own offspring? I need not say that if God is our enemy we *cannot* love him, nor need I offer a single remark on the maniac falsehoods sometimes uttered by those professing Christianity, that they are willing to be damned for the glory of God. Such sentiments are becoming the mad-house, but they are as foreign to the spirit of Christianity as heaven is higher than hell.

I might extend these obsevations on the reason of our obligation to obey God. The subject presents a delightful and almost boundless field for pious thought. But I cannot farther pursue it here. I commend it, sir, to your careful consideration. And I would ask each of my readers to answer for himself this all important question, "Why should I obey God?" I am certain the only answer must be, Because he has created me with all my powers and faculties and placed me in a world filled with blessings—because he is good, perfectly, immutably good—in fine, because he made me to make me happy, to which end he constantly ministers with a Father's care to all my wants, and gives me even while here hopes of a still happier world.

But passing from this topic, let me say I fully agree with you in the opinion that a penalty must of necessity be attached to a law, and that "it must be such as will enforce obedience to the law." This great truth should not be forgotten. The penalty is designed to secure obedience to, or to prevent an infraction of, the law. When the threatening of a penalty fails, punishment, the infliction of the threatened penalty, must be resorted to as the only remaining means of securing respect and obedience. It is very clear then, that penalty is attached by the wise legislator to the law for the purpose of supporting it. How poorly this would be effected in the case before us on your hypothesis may be easily seen.

What then is the first law enjoined by the Deity upon man? The Bible answers, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." What is the penalty attached to this law? Dr. Brownlee shall reply. "The penalty of God's law implies a declaration that God will punish the transgressor with a PUNISHMENT strictly and properly speaking, through ALL ETERNITY." But will this penalty secure obedience either now or ever to the law? The farthest from it possible. Adam transgressed and according to the Creed of the Reformed Dutch Church, "infants themselves even in their mother's womb" are infected with a corruption of their whole nature, and are deserving eternal damnation when they are first born into the world. But will you let me ask you where you find such a penalty as "punishment continued through all eternity" mentioned in the Bible? It is true you quote Gen. ii 17, "*In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*," and Gal. iii, 10, "*Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.*"—But are you ignorant that this is a mere begging of the question? Neither of these passages speak of a punishment continued through all eternity. Why then do you take it for granted that they imply such an idea? I cannot but wonder at the dilemma in which you have involved yourself. For after most solemnly affirming, without one particle of proof, that the penalty of the divine law is endless punishment, you add with a strange disregard of consequences, that "as certainly as man has incurred the penalty, and as certainly as God is true to his word, will that penalty fall on the head of the guilty."—That I do not misunderstand you, unless you sometimes misunderstand yourself, is evident from the declaration several times repeated that "infinite justice follows the sinner just as naturally as fire burns, or a stone falls." In these last declarations I most fully agree. God "will by no means clear the guilty;" and if man deserves endless punishment, I am convinced that God will, nay, must inflict it; for "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"—Now, sir, it will not be uncharitable to believe you a sinner, and on your own premises it will not be unjust to declare that if you expect an escape from the endless pains of hell, you virtually accuse God of injustice and "hold him up before heaven and earth a *convicted liar!*" This mild language I borrow from yourself. You either believe there is some means by which God will clear the guilty, when he declares he will not, or you do not believe the penalty of the law is endless punishment, or else you expect to suffer it.

But granting, sir, that, you and I, and every sinner should suffer endless misery, would that penalty prevent the future infraction of the law, or secure obedience to it? Neither. It would still be a broken, dishonored law. In hell you no doubt believe the wretched sufferers will be eternally growing in wickedness, adding crime to crime until they shall surpass imagination in blaspheming the holy name of the adorable God. And justice, infinite, unsullied justice demands this! What then may not justice demand? The law requires that man shall *love* his Maker. Man fails in one instance, and the penalty attached by infinite wisdom to the divine law, is inflicted; which instead of securing obedience, and thus restoring the tarnished honor of the law, makes man an infinitely greater sinner, and causes him eternally to blaspheme his God. Had the devil been permitted to suggest a penalty, I am certain it would be that of endless misery. But as it came from God, I cannot believe it is such as would so perfectly accord with Satan's wishes.

Let me illustrate this point. Our Legislature has passed laws against theft and robbery, and penalties are attached to each of these respective laws. Now what should we say of the wisdom of our lawgivers, if it was found by experiment that every penalty they had prescribed, instead of preventing these crimes, absolutely increased them a hundred fold—that the thief was only removed to a more favorable state for thieving, and the robber for robbing?—In man we should call this the greatest folly. But is not this the fact in relation to the divine penalty on your assumption? Punishment you contend is not designed to reform the punished, nor to prevent him from repeating his transgressions.

But the most singular of your assertions is the following:—"As to punishment, its ultimate end is to deter others, not to destroy its subject—that is a secondary effect which necessarily results from the primary object of punishment." To myself, sir, this appears rather worse than nonsense; it is absurd. Endless punishment you tell us is inflicted on a part of mankind to deter the rest from sin; and yet, strange indeed, it does not commence until the end of the world, the consummation of all things earthly and temporal—until the character and destiny of every individual of the human race is sealed for eternity, and precept and example must be forever unavailing!! What an admirable plan to deter men from sin! If any absurdity in the opinions of those who advocate so absurd a dogma as that of ceaseless punishment could astonish me, I might here express myself in strong terms. But really, sir, has it never occurred to you, that no reason ever was, or can be, assigned for the infliction of endless torments?—No, sir, if you would have people believe that doctrine, you must only say that such a punishment is *just*, and therefore must be inflicted, but never trust yourself in offering a reason for it. Call it a mystery. But boldly assert that it is true. The moment you attempt to offer reasons you expose your doctrine, if not your own good sense, to suspicion.—The truth is, and I can hardly avoid the conclusion, that you are aware of it, no simple object can be assigned which such punishment would secure. It can do the punished no good. That is conceded on all hands. God, who you say will inflict it, can hardly need such an engine to support his throne or his glory. And as to his possessing an attribute called *vindictive justice*, which requires the eternal wretchedness of the offender, it is one of the horrid assumptions made to bolster up a horrid doctrine.—Vindictive justice!

——— tantaene animis coelestibus irae!

Is it possible for a christian to ascribe such a principle to his heavenly Father? The well known fact alone could be taken as proof.

But endless punishment is designed to deter others from sin. It must then be the saints in heaven! This is not a novel doctrine and yet every feeling of the christian's heart revolts from the idea. Heaven, if such were the fact, would, in the spirit of its inhabitants, be too much like hell. Fear must become the only inciting principle to action. Love must be excluded, God dishonored, and man made wretched forever. I beg you, sir, to review this subject with candor, and pray you may find the truth and embrace it in the love of it. Respectfully, &c.

T. J. SAWYER.

Rev. W. C. BROWNLEE, D. D.

## THE FAITH OF JOB.

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job i, 21.

An humble resignation to the Divine will, in all the varied vicissitudes of this transitory life—and especially under the pressure of the many ills to which humanity is an heir—is certainly a desirable state of mind. And he who has weighed the affairs of this mortal existence in the balances of *Christian philosophy* and learned to estimate things according to their real value, has done much toward fortifying himself against the tribulation of the evil day. Viewing this state of being as simply preparatory to another of unmixed enjoyment, and connecting the idea of present pain with future happiness, he will discover that it is no less his privilege than his duty, to cultivate and preserve a spirit of resignation to the allotments of Providence.

Besure, in the midst of calamities—the full weight of which can be known by none other than the sufferer—it would seem like bitter mockery to recommend resignation to the one who has been "smitten of God and afflicted." When the heart is full, even to bursting, with the waters of grief, it cannot become calm and tranquil until a free vent has been given to the feelings, nor can the soul be resigned until the deep agony of sorrow is over. Nevertheless the resigned temper of mind, of which I have spoken, should be cultivated in anticipation of the trial—to the end that the shock may be met with the firmness of a christian philosopher.

But, alas! how few there are who have attained to this desirable state of feeling! We frequently imagine ourselves ready to endure tribulation, when we are least prepared to encounter the trial. We conceive ourselves firmly resolved to bear up manfully against the flowing tide of accumulating grief—but the hour of demonstration comes on—"the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

The pangs we suffer in consequence of the death of relatives, are the most difficult to endure of any we are called to experience. We should be more than mortal, or less than Man, did we not mourn

the departure from our society of those whom we dearly love. To be as fully prepared for such exigencies as circumstances may allow, is certainly a dictate of wisdom.

Many there are who can bear with composure the utter prostration of their hopes of political advancement, or of worldly property—but there are few who can behold the doings of death among their kindred according to the flesh, with that degree of resignation so essential to true peace of mind. There are few who can say *from the heart*, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; *blessed* be the name of the Lord."

Yet such was the language of one who has been set forth to the eye of the christian, as an example of integrity, piety, and patience.

Job is represented as a man especially favored of heaven. But his fortune and integrity furnished no security against the reverses to which humanity has ever been liable. His flocks and herds became the prey of robbers—his fields were laid waste by the tempest and the whirlwind—his servants were slain by the edge of the sword—and, to complete the catalogue of his calamities, his sons and his daughters were destroyed amid the ruins of his dwelling. Nought was left him, save his bosom companion, his integrity, and his confidence in God!

But ere he sat down to meditate on his multiplied afflictions, he acknowledged the Lord as the giver of the blessings he had previously enjoyed; recognized the Divine hand in all his calamities; admitted the right of the Almighty to remove the favors He had bestowed; and concluded by blessing the name of Jehovah. "*The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*"

There are principles advanced in the cited language, from which, as Christians, we may safely draw conclusions of the utmost importance. And those conclusions may furnish considerations which will do much toward encouraging in our hearts a spirit of resignation to the Divine will.

He who would be prepared to meet with composure the afflictive allotments of Providence, should ever remember that to God we are indebted for life which is the basis of all enjoyment, and for all the blessings with which our lives have been crowned And we should not fail to remember, that, as a general rule, the sorrow we experience in the loss of a friend or relative, bears some proportion to the happiness we had enjoyed in his society.

He who realizes that from God he has received all things, has made one advanse toward resignation of mind under the most severe trials—for the acknowledgment must follow, that God has a perfect right to withdraw the blessings He confers. He who gave has an undoubted right to take away—provided the gift in question, proved, on the whole, a blessing.

But Job went father than simply to admit the Divine right referred to. He recognized the hand of the Lord in his afflictions and calamities, no less than in the happiness and prosperity he had previously enjoyed. "Have we received good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" And his conduct in this particular is the more worthy of attention, inasmuch as in the age in which he lived, the opinion prevailed that there were two *eternal principles*—the one of them, Good; the other, Evil. To the former was ascribed the happiness enjoyed, and to the latter the misery endured, by mankind. But Job had been better instructed. It was his privilege, and it is the privilege of every christian, to recognize the hand of the Almighty God in every thing—in woas in weal—in darkness as in the light—in grief as in joy. To acknowledge in the Creator of all, the Sovereign Disposer of all.

Job went still farther. In calamity as in the full enjoyment of friends, relatives and fortune, he blessed the name of the Lord! What, then, must have been his views of the Divine character and purposes? How enlarged must have been his faith in the unchanging goodness of the Supreme Being!—and how strong and unyielding his confidence in the loving kindness of his Maker! * * * *

May mourning friends be enabled to entertain similar views of the Divine economy; so that, in times of trial, they may fervently say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." A. C. T.

## CALLOWHILL-STREET CHURCH,
PHILADELPHIA.

Br. Andrews, who is now ministering to this Congregation, commenced on Sabbath last a course of Lectures on the Parables. We had the pleasure, on Sunday 21st inst. of visiting this Church for the first time, and it is almost needless to say we were highly gratified in seeing the numerous and respectable audience that was assembled there on that day. In the evening it was judged there were 1400 or more persons present.

The Congregation in Lombard street Church, under the pastoral care of Br. Thomas, is also flourishing.

Our friends in Philadelphia appear to be prosperous, and where let us ask are they not? P.

## UNIVERSALIST CLERGYMEN.

In the list of Universalist Clergymen in this state, published by us a week or two since, we unintentionally omitted the name of Br.—— Miller of Southhold, L. I who was formerly a preacher among the Baptists. By the Trumpet, also, we perceive we omitted Br. J. C. Newell, of Stephentown. This was also unintentional. Indeed there may be many others, and our friends are particularly desired to notify us of any omissions that may still exist. Our object is to get a full and correct list. It will not only be gratifying to friends generally, but will be found convenient for reference. P.

We acknowledge the receipt of a pamphlet of 24 pages, entitled "*Essays on Imprisonment for Debt*," by Br. Charles Spear, of Glastenbury. We have not had time to examine it ourselves, but have observed it well spoken of, and from the source from whence it comes, we doubt not it is a work of merit upon the subject of which it treats.

## LIFE OF MURRAY.

Br. Whittemore has just published a neat edition of the Life of John Murray, with Notes and Appendix, at the very low price of *fifty* cents per copy. In doing this he has anticipated an extensive sale, and we doubt not in the least he will meet with it.

The New-York State Convention will meet in Utica, on the last Wednesday in this month.

L. W. of Shandaken, is informed that the expense of sending the Book he names by Mail will be very great, and he had better look out for some private opportunity of receiving it. Persons will undoubtedly be visiting the city, from his vicinity, by whom he can send.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Another short Sermon, "*The Question Answered—Is man a Free Agent?*" from our correspondent H. F. is received, and will appear soon.

Z. G. is received, and will be attended to.

Br Moore's article came too late for this number. It will appear in our next. We shall hold him to his promise.

## MARRIED,

In Philadelphia, on the 11th ult, by Ev. Abel C. Thomas, Mr. Edward Peers and Miss Mary McKinzie.

On the 18th, by the same, Mr. Thomas H. Palmer and Miss Sarah-Ann Vezey.

## PROSPECTUS

*For the 3d vol. of the Messenger, to be published simultaneously at New-York and Philadelphia, under the title of*

NEW-YORK CHRISTIAN MESSENGER AND PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSALIST.

The recent change in supplying our Philadelphia Patrons with the Messenger induces us thus early to present the public with Proposals for publishing the 3d vol. as noticed above. No essential change will be made in the course of the paper, unless it may be to avail ourselves of every possible opportunity of increasing the talent and interest in its columns. It will, therefore, in the language it has ever held forth to the world, continue to "plead the cause of a slandered and persecuted denomination of Christians—the UNIVERSALISTS;" endeavor to inspire confidence among its friends, and to induce as far as possible the thoughtless and unconcerned, and even opposers, to come forward into the field of examination and "reason together" on the great and glorious doctrines of a *world's reconciliation to God*.

Its motto may be, perhaps, the surest index of its character. It breathes neither wrath nor fury to the children of men, but on the contrary, it points to a peaceful messenger on the mountain top, proclaiming "good tidings," and "publishing peace." "*How beautiful upon the mountains, are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.*"

With unfeigned gratitude to the Universalist public for the many tokens of approbation bestowed upon our paper for the 18 months it has now been in existence, we submit these Proposals for the third volume, referring simply to the past, as a pledge for the future.

CONDITIONS.

The "*N. Y. Christian Messenger and Philadelphia Universalist*," will be published simultaneously in New-York and Philadelphia, every Saturday morning, on a royal sheet, quarto form, and close print, at $2 per annum, *in advance*, or $2 50 if not paid within the first six months. The first No. will appear on the first Saturday in Nov. next.

Subscribers in New-York and Philadelphia will be promptly served by Carriers, and all possible care will be observed in the Mailing department, that subscribers may regularly receive their papers.

The publishing office in New-York is at No's. 2 and 3 Marble Building, Chatham Square, and in Philadelphia, for the present, at No. 132 Chesnut-street, adjoining the United States Bank.

Communications by Mail must be *post paid*.

P. PRICE,
*Publisher and Proprietor.*

New-York, May 1833.


## CHEAP PAMPHLETS,
*Publishing, and for sale at this office.*

The list now comprises, Important Questions with Scripture Answers—Correspondence between a Universalist and a Member of the Reformed Dutch Church—Christ's Mission, a Sermon, by R. O. Williams—five pamphlets, containing Letters 1 to 10, addressed Dr. Brownlee by the Senior Editor of the Messenger—Female Influence, by Miss J. H. Kinney, and an article on the Kindness and Love of God, by A. C. Thomas. The Important Questions come at 50 cents per hundred, and the remainder at $2. per 100. The publication of the Letters, in pamphlet form, will be continued until the series is closed.

## Original.

### LINES.

*Written on hearing the Hymn, "God of Creation our Father and Savior," sung to the tune "Evangelist" at the Lombard-street Church, Philadelphia.*

BY JOHN PERRY.

Swell the loud pæan! be gratitude blended,
With off rings of praise to the Infinite Love!
Laud ye the Father of him who ascended,
Thro' death's gloomy shadows to glory above!

Laud him ye people!—ye aged and hoary,
Ye youthful and buoyant, His goodness recall;
Lift up your soul to the excellent glory,
Of "God the Creator and Savior of all."

Come from the desert of sin and of error,
And dwell in the Eden of truth and of grace;
Leave the foul dogma of heart-sinking terror—
The Gospel of Jesus, O, gladly embrace!

Nature resplendently shadows around you,
The light and the halo of goodness divine!
Burst from the fetters so long that have bound you—
The blackness of darkness to bigots resign!

Laud him, ye people from valley and mountain,
Let pæans of gratitude meekly arise;
Open the gates of the heart's deepest fountain,
To pour forth its praises to God in the skies!

Join the glad anthem!—throughout every nation,
The song of thanksgiving exultingly raise;
Rejoicing forever in the light of Salvation,
To God be ascriptions of honor and praise!

## Original.

### THE UNIVERSALIST CHILD.

BY JOHN PERRY, PHILADELPHIA.

I cannot go where the universal goodness of our heavenly Father is not manifested, in innumerable instances of unbounded affection toward the children of earth. Let me walk forth in some sweet morning of Spring—the flowers are glowing with a thousand beauties; the glittering dew drops hanging on their half closed leaves, like tears upon the cheek of beauty! and the birds, like angel spirits round the throne of God, send forth their morning orisons, to mingle with the breeze that bears them up to Heaven! In the evening, when the day-god has descended behind the blue hills in the far west; and drawn the mellowed vail of twilight over his purple face—when the flowers are closing, and biding their beauties in their leafy bells, and the birds have ceased their carollings, and with heads reclining upon their own soft bosoms, have sought repose from the aerial wanderings of the day—or, let me go forth in the calm and silent hour of midnight—let me look upon the countless myriads of bright and beautiful stars, that stud the arched canopy of heaven, shining like lights that burn to the glory of God, forever! let me gaze upon the wonders which every where surround me, on earth's broad surface, or in the depths of the mighty ocean—upon each work of Omnipotence, and the heart prompts the sentiment, nature and reason support it, and the tongue proclaims it; that God is all goodness! that the wonders of his Love and power are visible upon each atom that has ever sprung up from chaos and confusion.

How delightful are the emotions excited in the breasts of those who have been accustomed to look upon the works of Jehovah with the gaze of admiration, and a heart glowing with gratitude to the Almighty Author of nature, and affectionate love and benevolence to their fellow creatures, how delightful, I say, to those who possess such feelings and emotions, when they perceive parents inculcating principles of Universal Benevolence, and a reasonable and correct idea of the character of the Deity, into the minds of their young children—when the supreme Ruler of Heaven, and earth, is clothed in a mantle of Love, so extended, that the feeble and finite faculties of man cannot attach to it a limited boundary—a character so pure, so holy, and immaculate, so full of affection for the beings of his creation, that the young heart is imperceptibly drawn to adore Him whose wonders are upon the face of all created things! Oh, how my heart has leapt with delight in its silent temple, when I have heard a parent teach its darling child to lisp the hallowed sentiment, that "God is Love," that all his glorious attributes confirm the truth of the principle, and that the multiform blessings he is continually bestowing upon his creature man, is sufficient evidence that, after this earthly pilgrimage is finished, and this "mortal has put on immortality," he has prepared for us a brighter and a happier home, which his own bland smiles will cheer, throughout the rolling ages of eternity.

I have, at this moment, in my "mind's eye," a little girl, the subject of the present sketch, who, at this time, may, perhaps, be about twelve years of age. Up to the present period, much pains has been taken with her education; and her parents, possessing opinions of the most liberal order, have been careful to instil into her infant mind, those principles of benevolence, humanity, and Love, which are the only true foundation of all earthly felicity. Pursuing a plan in the education of their child, based upon correct and sound principles, they have so far formed its character; and after years will, I trust, prove how efficient has been their plan. Often have I listened with delight, to the innocent prattle of my little favorite. I have heard her dilate, with the artless simplicity of childhood, upon the strange wonders of creation—the beauty of the green fields, and upon the goodness of God! The deep lessons taught her, have not been planted in a barren soil; beautifully and fair they are springing up, giving evidence how well they have been cultivated. She has been taught the precepts of Love, as the great fountain from which all good must flow—that, as we cannot perceive, in the whole system of creation, the existence of an object that does not manifest unbounded affection on the part of the Creator—and that as all things in the great garden of nature, agree with the most perfect harmony, and form a system upon whose face benevolence is indelibly stamped, so should mankind, composing the most sentient portion of creation, mingle with perfect unity in the bonds of Love, and acknowledge and adore, with one voice, the wonderful attributes, and divine nature of their common Father!

Thus has the child been taught. There has been no teaching that the Supreme Being, to whom her little hands and lisping voice were raised in prayer, was a partial God—that he had lavished his smiles and blessings upon a few, and his direst curse upon the many—that he had prepared for the first an immortal state of being, where joy would abound forever, even heaven; and for the latter, unceasing, endless misery! Oh, no! that doctrine of tears and groans, was hidden from her view, and the joy-inspiring sentiment of Universal Salvation firmly planted in her bosom!

Oh, that it could be forever thus!—that parents would instil into the minds of their offspring, the hallowed precepts of Love, as the only sure means by which happiness can be secured in this terrestrial sphere—would that its "still small voice" might be heard in every circle, and its sweet and soothing influence be felt in every scene. Let the principle be poured upon the young mind, and like the genial influence of oil, when dropped upon the troubled ocean, all within will be calm and placid as the guileless dreams of infancy. Years may bring toil and sorrow, and misery and misfortune may blast the buds of promise that hang upon our way—the honors, the fame, and the glory of a high career, may be wrested from us—and the full and flowing cup of joy may be dashed forever from our lips—Yet still will the seed so early planted, produce its fruit; Love will reign in the heart; 'twill turn aside the fleetest arrow of malignant fate: 'twill be our guiding star, shining undimmed forever, until it is lost in the depthless ocean of Eternity!

### SWEARING.

The editors of the New-York Mirror close an article in a late number, on "Swearing," with the following remarks:

There is another kind of swearer—your young boy. We saw an urchin but yesterday, sitting with a grotesque group of ragged companions upon a heap of plank, in Theatre alley, with a black, wet American segar, which he had doubtless picked up from some gutter—the leavings of heaven only knows what filthy beggar. He was a good-looking wretch too—had rather a marked head—a pair of expressive eyes, and fine teeth; and his voice was sweet and boyish, but from his lips broke forth such blasphemy as actually made us shudder. It gave a gallows look to the young recreant. How all the moral brightness and beauty of youth faded and changed! Though we are no lover of habitual sentiment on every-day occurrences, yet there was to us, in this, something positively mournful and revolting. It blazoned forth a tale of wickedness and corruption, and spread out in the perspective a path of sin and wo. It seemed that, even then, a doom was on him. The corruption of a boy strikes us with double horror. A man may sin, yet not be lost hopelessly: there may be *yet* in his bosom—buried up, but not destroyed—many pure reminiscences, associations, affections, which may again overflow his heart, covering it with the fresh verdure of feeling and virtue; but in such a young son of iniquity, the very fountains of goodness must be dried. One is certain that his character has no redeeming attributes; and it is most probable that his descent to destruction will be steeper and steeper, till his career be checked by the grates of a dungeon, or perhaps a scaffold close the scene.


## UNIVERSALIST BOOKS.

The following Universalist Books are kept constantly for sale at the Messenger office, 2 and 3 Marble-Building, Chatham-Square, New York.

Christian Messenger, Volume I. bound, 2 dolls.

Murray's Life, with preface and notes, 75 cents.

Ancient History of Universalism, from the age of the apostles to the Reformation. Price $1,20.

Modern History of Universalism, from the Reformation to the present time. Price $1,20.

Ballou's Works. Treatise on Atonement, 75 cents Notes on the Parables 75. Sermons on Important Doctrinal Subjects, 37 1-2.

Streeters Universalist Hymn Book, different qualities and prices, 60 cents to $1,75.

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